



The Roche Associates, Inc.

MIRANDO HACIA EL FUTURO
A NATIONAL OFFICE RELOCATION
FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR
THE ASPIRA ASSOCIATION

Confidential

August 10, 1985

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The Roche Associates, Inc.
Implementation and Strategic Planning

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Feasibility Study Report is to provide information and guidance to the ASPIRA National Board of Directors and staff regarding the relocation of the National Office, and the identification of the important program, resource and organizational development issues and opportunities.

This study is based primarily upon interviews with key actors and supporters of the ASPIRA movement. In addition, advice has been sought from other national associations and individuals knowledgeable in organizational development.

The major recommendations for helping ASPIRA to continue building its impressive movement include the following:

1. The National Office should be relocated to Washington, D. C. as soon as possible.
 2. The funding support of the National Office, as well as ASPIRA Associate and Affiliate entities, should be diversified to include more constituency-based activities.
 3. New fund raising activities recommended for the National Office include:
 - o Development of an "ASPIRA Movement Alumni" Association which would benefit the entire ASPIRA family.
 - o Aggressive identification of the 60,000+ Aspirantes, who have been served by ASPIRA since 1961.
 - o Development of an ASPIRA Movement Newsletter which can be widely circulated throughout the nation to keep ASPIRA supporters informed of Association activities, as well as critical issues facing U. S. Hispanics.
 - o The development of a national direct mail campaign that is targeted to the natural supporters of the ASPIRA mission.
 4. New fund raising activities recommended for the ASPIRA Associates and Affiliate include:
 - o Development of youth membership and adult membership campaigns, the proceeds of which would support local ASPIRA programs.
- Finally, the organizational development issues which require further study and deliberation by the National Board are identified.

II. INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

In October 1984, Steven W. Meister, one of three Principals from The Roche Associates, Inc., a strategic planning consulting firm, met with ASPIRA National Executive Director Juan Rosario to discuss ASPIRA's intentions of relocating its National Offices from New York City to Washington, D. C.

Subsequent to that meeting, The Roche Associates, on November 2, 1984, submitted a proposal to conduct a two and one-half month feasibility study to address the dual issues of the National Office relocation and the potential for initiating new fund raising activities that would benefit the ASPIRA National Office and the Associates and Affiliate.

On July 2, 1985 Mr. Meister met with the National Board's Strategic Planning Committee to review the proposed feasibility study goals, methodology, and planned outcomes. Immediately following that meeting, a Letter of Agreement was signed to retain The Roche Associates to conduct the study. However, because of ASPIRA's need to have the study completed by its August 10, 1985 National Board of Directors meeting, the study timetable was reduced from ten weeks to five weeks.

During the first week of the study The Roche Associates were informed by Dr. Rosario that ASPIRA's Strategic Planning Committee had circulated a draft Proposal For An ASPIRA National Association. This development had a significant impact on the scope of the study: in addition to assessing the feasibility of National Office relocation, the scope of the study was broadened to also assess issues related to the proposed reorganization of the national body.

Purpose of the Study

In the July 2, 1985 Letter of Agreement the following critical issues to be examined by the Feasibility Study were identified:

- o How will relocation of the National Offices affect ASPIRA's mission, goals, and long range plans?
- o How will relocation affect current and future sources of funding? Will current funding sources continue their support? Will relocation open the doors for obtaining other funds from new sources?
- o How will relocation affect current and future programmatic activities? Will some activities need to be discontinued? Will some activities be more feasible if the National Office is located in Washington, D. C.?
- o What new programs or services do ASPIRA Associates and Affiliates want/need from the National Office?
- o How do other national organizations typically function vis-a-vis local affiliates? What are the various program, fund raising, and resource development roles played by the National and the local affiliate offices in three selected national organizations?
- o How might a new national fund raising program which is targeted to ASPIRA alumni be organized so that it is supported as a worthwhile activity by ASPIRA Associates and Affiliates?
- o What gross and net incomes might be expected from such a new national fund raising program?
- o What image should be projected by a new Washington, D. C. - based National Office? What are the projected costs for various public relations activities?
- o What obstacles need to be overcome in order to smooth the way for ASPIRA's National Office relocation?
- o What steps need to be taken in the near future to implement ASPIRA's National Office relocation, programs, and resource development plans?

Information and Data Collection Procedures

Information and data was collected from a variety of sources, including:

1. Background reading materials provided by ASPIRA National Office and three national associations.
2. Telephone interviews with:
 - o the six Associate/Affiliate Executive Directors
 - o the six Associate/Affiliate Board Chairpersons
 - o six selected ASPIRA of America funding sources; and
 - o two national associations.
3. Face-to-face interviews with:
 - o the National Executive Director;
 - o National Office staff; and
 - o one national association.
4. Library research conducted in Washington, D.C. at the offices of the American Society of Association Executives.

The survey instruments that were developed for the interviews were approved during the third week of the study by the four Strategic Planning Committee members and the National Executive Director. These instruments were designed to employ open-ended questions, which would elicit qualitative information from the respondents. The Roche Associates used this strategy because of the need to understand the subtle issues involved in the proposed National Office relocation and National governing body restructuring.

The three (3) National associations which were interviewed were selected from a list of seven associations that were identified by the ASPIRA Strategic Planning Committee on July 2, 1985. The three associations were:

1. The Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
2. The National Organization of Women
3. The National Urban League

Similarly, the six (6) ASPIRA of America funding sources which were interviewed were selected from a longer list of funders that were identified by the ASPIRA Strategic Planning Committee and the National Executive Director. These funding sources were:

1. Aetna
2. Ford Foundation
3. Gulf and Western Foundation
4. IBM
5. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
6. United Way of America

* * *

Having successfully completed all the activities and tasks defined in the July 2, 1985 Letter of Agreement, The Roche Associates, Inc. is pleased to offer ASPIRA this feasibility study report: MIRANDO HACIA EL FUTURO - A National Office Relocation Feasibility Study For The ASPRIA Association.

III. FINDINGS

A. PERCEPTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATES AND AFFILIATE

Introduction

Interviews were conducted with twelve (12) individuals including the Board Chairpersons and the Executive Directors of the ASPIRA Associates and the Affiliate. As mentioned above, the interviews consisted almost entirely of open-ended questions. Therefore, the responses to each question were extremely diverse. For example, when respondents were asked about their staff development and inservice education needs, ten different answers were provided by the twelve respondents. In order to identify the priority staff development needs, topics mentioned by one-quarter (1/4) to one-third (1/3) of the respondents were assumed to be major needs.

Board Development Needs

The priority board education and development topics identified by the respondents included:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Fund Raising Training | [7/12] ¹ | (4/7) ² |
| 2. Roles and Responsibilities | [5/12] | (1/5) |
| 3. Financial Management | [4/12] | (1/4) |
| 4. Public Relations | [4/12] | (3/4) |

Alternative education strategies mentioned by the respondents for meeting these priority board development needs included:

- o Peer Training
- o Seminars sponsored by the ASPIRA National Office

¹[7/12] indicates that seven (7) of twelve (12) respondents identified the topic as a priority need.

²(4/7) indicates that four (4) of the seven (7) respondents who perceived the need as a priority were board members.

- o Training conducted by outside consultants
- o Participation in the United Way Hispanic Leadership Development Program

Staff Development Needs

The priority staff development and inservice education needs identified by the respondents included:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. College Tuition Reimbursement | [5/12] ¹ | (2/5) ³ |
| 2. Public Relations | [3/12] | (2/3) |
| 3. Counseling Skills | [3/12] | (2/3) |

Alternative education strategies mentioned by the respondents for meeting these priority staff development needs included:

- o Locating additional funds for tuition reimbursement at local colleges and universities
- o Peer training
- o Seminars sponsored by the ASPIRA National Office
- o Training conducted by outside consultants

Major Associate Strengths

The major Associate strengths identified by the respondents included:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Employing a very committed staff | [4/12] ¹ | (2/4) ³ |
| 2. Being part of a stable, meaningful movement | [4/12] | (3/4) |
| 3. Having a well managed Associate | [4/12] | (3/4) |
| 4. Providing high quality youth services | [3/12] | (1/3) |

³(2/5) indicates that two (2) of the five (5) respondents who perceived the need as a priority were staff members.

Major Associate Weaknesses

The major Associate weaknesses identified by the respondents included:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Fund Raising | [6/12] ¹ | (3/6) ³ |
| 2. Board "Know How" | [3/12] | (3/3) |

Major Associate Administrative Problems

Only the six Executive Directors were asked about the major administrative and organizational development problems currently confronting them. One Associate had no major problems. The other five Associates identified problems that were all related to fund raising and resources development, including:

- o The lack of a critical mass of staff
- o High staff turnover as a result of low salaries
- o Cash flow problems
- o The need for additional unrestricted income

Major Associate Needs

There were a variety of responses to the question, "How would you spend an unexpected 'windfall' donation of \$100,000?" Four (4) of the twelve (12) respondents reported that they would expand Associate Leadership programs and services (three (3) of the four (4) were Executive Directors). Other responses included:

- o Raising staff salaries [2/12]¹
- o Balancing a deficit budget [2/12]
- o Underwriting a new program [2/12]
- o Investing the funds [1/12]
- o Purchasing a building [1/12]

Major Associate Program Issues

Only the six (6) Executive Directors were asked about the variety of programs they administer on a day-to-day basis. Critical program issues identified by the Associates included:

1. Health Careers Program

The Florida Affiliate wants to be able to offer a Health Careers Program in the near future. The five (5) Associates who currently operate the program are very concerned about its planned phase-out by the U.S. Public Health Service and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Although the program's traditional funding sources may feel that the need for the program is lessening, or that it is time for them to shift their funding support to address other problems, the ASPIRA Associates unanimously feel that the need is more important than ever.

The Associates are looking to the National Office for leadership in securing the funding to continue this vital educational counseling service.⁴

2. The Business Careers Program

Four (4) of the five (5) Associates who currently do not have an operating Business Careers Program would like to establish one. The fifth Associate is focusing its limited resources on other, more pressing program priorities.

The New Jersey Associate which receives foundation, Block grant, and United Way funding to support the program reports that corporations are now beginning to support their program.

3. Scholarship Programs

Two (2) Associates reported the establishment of small scholarship programs which they administer. Four (4) Associates reported that they have positioned themselves to influence the distribution of scholarship funds which are administered by local and state governments, foundations, and other independent entities.

⁴An interview with the RWJ Foundation Project Officer, who is also an Aspirante, confirmed that he is willing to "chair and organize the beneficiaries" of the ASPIRA Health Careers Program to help ASPIRA continue the program.

Although all respondents expressed interest in the possible development of an ASPIRA Association Scholarship Fund, the following risk was identified: ASPIRA should be careful not to get into the position where it must turn down the vast majority of applicants.

4. The ASPIRA Leadership Development Program

All six (6) respondents felt that the ASPIRA Leadership Development Program is an extremely important program. Not only does this program set ASPIRA apart from its competitors and collaborators, but it is acknowledged that this program is the vital component in the "ASPIRA Process."

Several respondents mentioned that recent funding cuts in their general operating budgets have forced them to lay off Club Organizers and have their Counselors assume the dual roles of counseling and organizing. A solution to this problem needs to be identified. Two (2) respondents specifically requested that the National Office arrange for an evaluation of the program, with one mentioning that the needs of the youth have probably changed during the twenty-four years since the program was designed. A third respondent mentioned the need for flexibility in program implementation, so that the program is not overly centralized.

A final issue regarding the ASPIRA Leadership Development Program pertains to the need for staff inservice training. There are concerns that the program not become "stale" and that newly hired staff be appropriately trained. Because several Associates perceive themselves to be particularly skilled in program implementation, peer training may be a viable option.

5. The Proposed ASPIRA Leadership Intern Program

Although two (2) Associate Executive Directors reported that they had not yet seen the proposal, every Associate indicated that they will actively participate in the public policy internship program, if it is funded.

6. Potential Future Programs

During the next two (2) to ten (10) years, each Associate hopes to expand its existing services to new geographic areas within its statewide or commonwealth-wide service areas. In addition, the following potential future program initiatives were identified:

- a. Work with elementary school children [4/6]
- b. Work with adults [2/6]
- c. Establish vocational programs [2/6]

Major Associate Policy Research and Advocacy Issues

The priority policy research and advocacy issues for Associates identified by the respondents included:

- 1. School Drop Outs [11/12]¹ (6/11)³
- 2. Leadership Development [4/12] (2/4)
- 3. Hispanic Educational Issues [4/12] (2/4)

The Mission of the ASPIRA Movement

The twelve (12) respondents were asked what they believed the "real mission" of the ASPIRA movement to be, regardless of the written mission statements found in the corporation's legal documents. The most frequent responses included:

- 1. Advocacy re: Puerto Rican Needs [6/12]¹ (1/6)³
- 2. Leadership Development [6/12] (2/6)

If educational opportunities are understood to be a major advocacy issue (see above), then the responses are basically consistent with ASPIRA's three formal written goal/mission statements, including:

- o Leadership Development
- o Educational Opportunity
- o Advocacy

Other miscellaneous responses of the Executive Directors included:

- o Empowerment (2/6)
- o Provision of Services (1/6)

Strengths and Weaknesses of the National Office

When asked about the major strengths and weaknesses of the National Office, the overwhelming opinion of the respondents was that the major strength was the commitment, personality, leadership style, and program expertise of National Executive Director Juan Rosario. Eight (8) of twelve (12) respondents gave this response immediately.

Two major weaknesses noted by the respondents included:

1. Parochial Power Struggles Within the Board [5/12]¹ (2/5)³
2. Lack of Program and Policy Leadership [4/12] (3/4)

Recommended Roles of the National Office

In general the twelve (12) respondents agreed with the proposed major roles of the National Office that were described in the Draft Proposal for an ASPIRA National Association, adopted by the National Board's Strategic Planning Committee on July 2, 1985. (See Section IV RECOMMENDATIONS, for a more detailed description of suggested National Office roles.)

When asked how the National Office could be most helpful to their Associate, the priority responses included:

1. Inservice Board and Staff Training [5/12]¹ (1/5)³
2. Fund Raising Training [4/12] (2/4)

In addition each of the six Associate Executive Directors expressed interest in computer networking, with three reporting that they were seeking their first computer.

When asked about the major policy research and advocacy issues on which the National Office should focus, the overwhelming response was educational attainment [6/8], with four respondents unable to render an opinion. Two of the eight who offered an opinion saw leadership development as the major policy research issue.

Finally, all twelve (12) respondents supported the publication of an ASPIRA Association newsletter, provided that Associates could publish their own if they wanted to.

Associate Reaction to the Proposed National Association Restructuring

Eleven (11) of the twelve (12) respondents support some type of restructuring of the National Association. The twelfth person is not sure how the proposal will benefit his or her Associate. Of the eleven (11) respondents who support restructuring, eight (8) want it to occur by the end of the current fiscal year (i.e., July 1, 1986), including three (3) who want it by January 1986, three (3) who want it to coincide with the relocation of the National Office, and two (2) who want it by July 1, 1986. The remaining three (3) respondents who want to see restructuring occur feel it should be implemented during FY 1986/87.

All twelve (12) respondents believe that new Associates and Affiliates should be chartered, but the general consensus is this should occur after the restructuring of the National Association is finalized.

There was no consensus concerning the geographic service areas that new and/or existing Associates should be chartered to serve. The responses included:

- o Wherever concentrations of Puerto Ricans live [4/12]¹ (0/4)³
- o Statewide Charters [5/12] (3/5)

There was also no consensus about the most critical issues involved in restructuring the National Association. In fact, only the first two issues listed below were mentioned by more than one person.

- o Balancing Associate and National Needs

- o Associate autonomy
- o Disunity
- o Associate needs assistance from National Office
- o National Association member ownership
- o The organizational development of the National Office
- o The required revisions of ASPIRA bylaws and Articles of Association
- o Conflict between the Board and staff
- o Abolition of the 7th entity
- o Overall goals of the ASPIRA Movement

When asked whether non-Puerto Ricans should be elected to the National and Associate Boards of Directors the six (6) Executive Directors were evenly split and responded as follows:

- o Yes, for the kids' sake, as well as to help us recruit corporate types.
- o We're not ready for that.
- o I think so because we want to recruit representatives from corporations.
- o Let's keep it in the Puerto Rican community.
- o In spirit no, but in practice yes, because it will help us to fund raise.
- o It hasn't and probably won't happen, but we are considering forming a Board of Advisors.

B. THE EXPERIENCE OF THREE NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Introduction

Interviews were conducted with the Chapter Development staff of three (3) national associations. In addition, library research was conducted by Roche Associate staff at the offices of the American Society of Association Executives, located in Washington, D.C.

As mentioned earlier, the three associations were selected from a list of seven (7) national associations identified by the ASPIRA Strategic Planning Committee. These three (3) associations confronted many of the major issues of organizational structure, as well as national office relations with local affiliates.⁵

Each of the associations share a similarity with ASPIRA in mission and purpose: they are all movements designed to empower their constituents.

- o The Girl Scouts of the U. S. A. (GSUSA) is a movement designed to enable girls "to develop their potential, to make friends, and to become a vital part of their community."
- o The National Organization of Women (NOW) is designed to "take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society."
- o The National Urban League's (NUL) purpose is "the elimination of racial discrimination and segregation in this country and achievement of parity for blacks and other minorities in every phase of American life."

The following discussion will examine the models of these national organizations in three parameters: function, structure, and financing. For some of the items presented, relevant generic issues, identified through library research, will also be discussed.

⁵Short of an in-depth and highly theoretical analysis, it is impossible to present the full range of national models due to so many individualized variations and configurations.

National Office Functions

All three organizations share similar national office functions, including:

1. Setting broad national policy and/or agenda for its local affiliates, councils, or chapters
2. Providing technical assistance to affiliates in the areas of fund raising, financial management, programming, internal planning, and staff and member training.
3. Advocating at the national level through legislative, media, and interorganizational forums to promote the purpose of the organization and the interests of their constituents.
4. Facilitating communication and establishing a national identity through periodic membership conventions and/or newsletters.
5. Promoting expansion of the organization by developing new affiliates.
6. Maintaining organizational integrity through periodic monitoring of affiliate activities.

The NUL has two additional functions that are central to its operations:

- o researching issues that affect its constituents.
- o program development - i.e., formulating, securing funding, and coordinating with local affiliates for program implementation.

The GSUSA has a very detailed delineation of the respective roles of the national organization and local councils. (See APPENDIX II.)

National Association Structure

There are two basic models for the structure of a national organization. They can be characterized as the "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches. The "top-down" model has dues, membership, and activities focused at the national level with the national office having the greater budget, staff size, and control than do the local affiliates. The "bottom-up", or federation, model has the local affiliates dominant in these areas.

In either model, affiliates can be structured in a number of ways: a tiered model where locals join states, which join regional and finally national entities; or an equal model where an affiliate, local or state, has the same degree of power.

In any event, none of the three associations who were interviewed fits a particular model; there are too many variables. Few organizations are ever going to be alike. Discussion of the three associations interviewed will proceed along the following lines: affiliate structure and charter, Board structure, and membership.

1. Affiliate Structure and Charters

The GSUSA has over 300 local councils with no state or regional structure. The national organization interacts directly with the local councils and with the assistance of three field operations centers, which are assigned to councils based on the size of the councils rather than the geographic area. The operations centers provide technical assistance and service to the councils through contracted management consultants. The councils are chartered for six year terms and then for continuing, on-going terms based on self-evaluations performed by the councils. The GSUSA bylaws carefully spell out the chartering process. The national office developed criteria and standards for the local councils, as well as a procedure for mediation of jurisdictional disputes or proposed changes.

NOW has a tiered chapter structure from local to state to regional to national. There are over 800 chapters in nearly all states which are divided into regions. Most of the chapters are fairly small (less than 125 members); a minimum of ten members are needed to start a chapter. State organizations can have paid staff and lobbyists. The chapters are chartered by the national organization upon meeting the requirement of having a bylaws and a purpose consistent with the national organization.

The NUL has 113 affiliates in a more decentralized and autonomous model than the other two organizations. Most of the affiliates are separate corporate entities. Affiliates must meet certain terms of affiliation, among which is to receive local United Way funding, of which 4.5% goes to the national office. The NUL has no state structure, but it has four regional offices with national headquarters in New York. It also has operations and research departments based in Washington, D.C.

2. Board Structure

The GSUSA has a 40+ member national Board of Directors with four officers. It meets twice a year, manages the corporate affairs and appoints the executive director. Each of the six regions must be represented by at least three Board members.

The Board is elected by the National Council, which sets the general policy of the GSUSA at its triennial conventions (every three years). At least 80% of the National Council must be delegates from local councils or lone troops. There can be no more than 2,000 delegates to the National Council.

NOW has a 33 member Board of Directors, composed almost entirely of representatives elected by the nine (9) regional boards. There are five officers, and the Board meets four times a year, apart from the annual conference.

The NUL has more of a corporate board model, with affiliates only providing a few members. Of the 44 member board, about half are from the private business sector, and the rest represent a cross-section of American society. Its board also meets quarterly and runs an annual meeting.

3. Membership

GSUSA membership is based on payment of dues and adherence to the principles of the organization. Aside from the membership of the girl scouts themselves, there is also a range of adult memberships, including sustaining and lifetime, based on the amount of dues paid. All local council members are thus automatically national members.